

Abstract

A method for operating a peer network on a computer network is presented. A Peer may
5 be registered by name (Peername) into a Peername System (PNS). The Peer runs software that
communicates with a Gateway computer located on the computer network. Users on the
computer network connect to the PNS, for example, by surfing to the PNS with browser
software. The user submits a request to the PNS to be routed to the Peer associated with a
particular Peername. The PNS routes the user to the appropriate Gateway computer with which
10 the Peer communicates. The Gateway passes the user's request to the Peer, and passes the Peer's
response back to the user.